



Second Sunday of Easter - Divine Mercy Sunday April 12, 2015

Sunday Liturgy Guide for the Church of the Poor in the Spirit of the New Evangelization

The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, embodies God's Mercy through the faithful witness of the people and the Word of God.

On this Second Sunday of Easter, the Divine Mercy Sunday, the Church invites us to trust in the divine benevolence of the heart of Jesus as we face the trials of our Christian life today. In this spirit let us continue to reflect on the Church as Discipleship in Community, this time as Church of the Poor, articulated by the PCP-II. Listen to what PCP-II has to say:

“C.5 The Church of the Poor

(123) In the Scriptures, the poor are blessed. ‘Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God is yours.’ It is not their poverty that is ‘blessed’. Nor are they blessed because they are necessarily better Christians than their prosperous brothers and sisters. But they are blessed because their poverty has been historically the privileged place of the gracious intervention of God’s saving grace. Just as the sin of Adam (‘O happy fault!’ – Easter

Proclamation) occasioned God to decide that his Son become savior, so the poverty of people brought in God’s intervention.

(124) In light of the above, in order credibly to witness to the love of God in Christ Jesus, we need to become the ‘Church of the Poor.’ This expression, used by Pope John Paul II, does not mean that the Church should include only the materially poor and that there is no place in the Church for those who are not. For the Church must, like her Savior, embrace every one of every economic class.

What then is the ‘Church of the Poor’?”

The concept “Church of the Poor” was first used by St. Pope John XXIII in his radio message on 11 September 1962, a month before the opening of the of the Second Vatican Council. Pope Francis himself uses the expression: “A Poor Church for the Poor”. If everybody wishes to get rich, if richness is the giver of true happiness, if to be rich is the ideal, why is there no desire to be the “Church of the Rich”, a “Rich Church for the Rich”? ■

Introductory Rites

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen

P. The Peace of the Risen Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

Introduction and Welcome

P: Dear brothers and sisters, let us continue to relish our Easter joy. We do so with trust in the Divine Mercy that flows from the Sacred Heart of Jesus that loves us with a human heart. It is from the Sacred Heart of Jesus that we receive mercy and grace, hope and salvation, justice and peace in the everyday trials of our Christian life that seeks to live a life in common with the poor.

Penitential Act

P: Brethren (brothers and sisters), to prepare ourselves to celebrate worthily these great sacred mysteries, let us now acknowledge our sins, and ask God for pardon and strength:

P: I confess..

C: to almighty God...to pray for me to the Lord our God.

P: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

C: Amen.

P: Lord, have mercy.

C: Lord, have mercy.

P: Christ, have mercy.

C: Christ, have mercy.

P: Lord, have mercy.

C: Lord, have mercy

Gloria

Glory to God in the highest Glory to God in the Highest!

And on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, Almighty

Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P: Let us pray: God of everlasting mercy, who in the very recurrence of the paschal feast kindle the faith of the people you have made your own, increase, we pray, the grace you have bestowed, that all may grasp and rightly understand in what font they have been washed, by whose Spirit they have been reborn, by whose Blood they have been redeemed. Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

C: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Acts 4:32-35

L: A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell them, bring the proceeds of the sale, and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Commentary on Acts 4:32-35:

This is Luke's dramatic presentation of the impact of the descent of the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the apostles upon the early Christian community. By opening their hearts to one another, the members of the Church began to understand one another even as they spoke in different languages. They converged together in the proclamation of the Word and in the breaking of the bread. They repented and were baptized. Their baptism led them to a new lifestyle in Jesus, the Risen Lord: their devotion to the apostles' teaching, their fellowship, the breaking of the bread and prayers. In the concrete, a new living and saved community in Christ meant: live together in common – one world, one life – through the selling of their property and distributing the proceeds to all according to each one's need. This act of love and justice is rounded up by prayer and the Eucharist together. Their increase in number was due to the presence of the Spirit, the fidelity of each one to Jesus and the life-witness of the early church.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24

Let the house of Israel say, "His mercy endures forever." Let the house of Aaron say, "His mercy endures forever." Let those who fear the LORD say, "His mercy endures forever."

R: Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting. or: R/ Alleluia.

I was hard pressed and was falling, but the LORD helped me. My strength and my courage is the LORD, and he has been my savior. The joyful shout of victory in the tents of the just:

R: Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting. or: R/ Alleluia.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the LORD has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes. This is the day the LORD has made;

let us be glad and rejoice in it.

R: Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, his love is everlasting. or: R/ Alleluia.

Commentary on Ps 118:

Though this is an individual hymn of thanksgiving, the psalm is really composed of two songs. The first is in the first person singular: vv. 1-21; and the second is in the first person plural, vv. 23-27. The transition is v. 22. Vv. 28-29 go back to the individual who repeats the opening verse. On the other hand, it can be said that the psalm has two parts, for another reason: the first part takes place in the tents of the people in Jerusalem (vv. 5-18); the second occurs in the temple (vv. 19-29). The reason for thanksgiving is the individual's experience of God's mercy that has liberated him. But the individual experience is also a community experience. He who had suffered, the stone rejected by the builders, God has made into a cornerstone: a strong foundation of faith, in the temple.

Second Reading: 1 John 5:1-6

L: The second reading is taken from the First Letter of John

Beloved: Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is begotten by God, and everyone who loves the Father loves also the one begotten by him. In this way we know that we love the children of God when we love God and obey his commandments. For the love of God is this, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome, for whoever is begotten by God conquers the world. And the victory that conquers the world is our faith. Who indeed is the victor over the world but the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came through water and blood, Jesus Christ, not by water alone, but by water and blood. The Spirit

is the one that testifies, and the Spirit is truth.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: *Thanks be to God.*

Commentary on 1 John 5:1-6:

God is love. To believe that Jesus is His Son and to follow him in loving one's neighbor is to love God who is love. The commandment of loving one's neighbor draws us together and makes us one new family of God. This transforms the world. This is the victory of faith in Jesus Christ. But Christian faith embraces immediately the self-giving of Jesus who shed his blood for our sake. Anyone who believes in Jesus but does not embrace this new life of self-giving for others even unto death is not a believer in Jesus at all. Only through faith and participation in the sacrifice of Christ – his self-giving on the Cross – are we able to participate in his new life.

Alleluia Verse: John 20:29

R: Alleluia, alleluia. You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me, says the Lord; blessed are they who have not seen me, but still believe! **R: Alleluia, alleluia.**

Gospel: John 20:19-31

P: The Lord be with you.

C: *And with your spirit.*

P: A reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John.

C: *Glory to you, O Lord.*

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so

I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: *Praise be to you, O Lord Jesus Christ.*

Commentary on John 20:19-31

This is a key story among the apparition narratives in John's gospel. Jesus takes on a mysterious appearance but reveals himself to his disciples as the same person who had suffered and died, marked by the scars and wounds of his passion and death. Of course, the disciples receive him with joy: he is not dead after all! And then Jesus proceeds to reveal his divinity: he breathes on them, baptizing

them with the Holy Spirit. They are now made new: the spirit/breath of God gave them life according to the Old Times, but the spirit they are receiving now is the spirit of him who has risen from the dead! And by making them new, Jesus shares with them the mission that he himself has received from the Father. The promise at the Last Supper is now made real. Thomas' need for proof that it is indeed Jesus from the dead is now fulfilled. But John says: in the future, encounters with Jesus and sharing of his intimate presence will happen because of the witness of the believers and the written gospel, the Good News, the Word of God in our time!

Homily: The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, embodies God's Mercy through the faithful witness of the people and the Word of God.

Summary of the Sunday Reading Message	Concrete description of the poor people and their situation	Reflection/ Points for reflection/ Call/ Challenge
The Church of the Poor, through the Basic Ecclesial Communities, embodies God's Mercy through the faithful witness of the people and the Word of God.	Describe the extent of material poverty experienced by the poor in your community. Are there homeless, hungry, jobless, drug-addicts, alcoholics, sick and abandoned people there? Why?	The breath of the Risen Jesus makes us new. This newness unifies our acts of love and justice with prayer and the Eucharist. The poor is in the heart of this unity.

**Profession of Faith:
General Intercessions**

P: Dear sisters and brothers, let us humbly and confidently raise our voices in prayer to our heavenly Father. For every prayer let our response be: Lord, shower us with your divine mercy.

R: Lord, shower us with your divine mercy.

L: Let us pray for the Church: that being a Church of the Poor spread all over the world, she may continue to proclaim and give witness to a new life lived in common with the poor as the greatest result of Evangelization. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, shower us with your divine mercy.

L: For our Holy Father, Pope Francis, for the bishops, priests, deacons, for those in consecrated life and for all those who are entrusted with the care and administration of the church as People of God: that they may continue to give witness to the written word by giving pastoral examples of simple life-style and rejection of ecclesiastical vanities such as power, wealth and privilege that are supplied to them by those who oppress the poor and by exhorting the rich to live in solidarity with the poor and to love them with special preference. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, shower us with your divine mercy.

L: For world leaders and all those entrusted with governance and administration of the goods of the earth: that they may promote the distribution of land to the landless and the tiller, jobs and just family living wage to the worker, the defense of and respect for human rights of all, especially the fulfilment of the quest for justice and indemnification of those whose rights have been violated by the state and its security agents and the stop to their corruption and violence. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, shower us with your divine mercy.

L: For all of us, inhabitants of the earth and citizens of heaven: that we may live our lives according to the values of the new life lived in common with the poor: loving and just, compassionate and forgiving, generous and attentive to the needs of others, peaceable and ready to share without limits, for the world and its goods are all ours to share. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, shower us with your divine mercy.

L: For our beloved dead: that in the forgiveness of their sins, they may find eternal rest in the heart of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, shower us with your divine mercy.

L: For our special intentions, in the silence of our hearts. (*pause*)... Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, shower us with your divine mercy.

P: Lord, these are the prayers we present to you today, Divine Mercy Sunday. We ask you: grant them to us by the benevolence of the heart of your Son. We ask this through same Christ our Lord. Risen

R: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts

P: Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,

C: Blessed be God forever.

P: Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

C: May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P: Accept, O Lord, we pray, the oblations of your people (and of those you have brought to new birth), that renewed by confession of your name and by Baptism, they may attain unending happiness. Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Prayer of the Eucharist

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up to the Lord.

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: It is right and just.

P: It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but on this day above all to laud you yet more gloriously, when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.

For he is the true lamb who has taken away the sins of the world; by dying he has destroyed death, and by rising, restored life.

Therefore, overcome with paschal joy, every land, every people exults in your praise and even the heavenly Powers, with the angelic hosts, sing together the unending hymn of your glory, as they acclaim:

A: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Acclamation

P: The mystery of faith.

Save us, Savior of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you

have set us free.

(Concluding the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest says:)

Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

Communion Rite

The Lord's Prayer

Doxology

C: For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.

Sign of Peace

P: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles; Peace ... Who live and reign for ever and ever.

C: Amen.

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Breaking of the Bread

A: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world ... grant us peace.

Communion

P: Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

A: Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Prayer after Communion

P: Let us pray: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that our reception of this paschal Sacrament may have

a continuing effect in our minds and hearts. Through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Final Blessing

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And with your spirit.

P: Bow down for the blessing: May God, who by the Resurrection of his Only Begotten Son was pleased to confer on you the gift of redemption and of adoption, give you gladness by his blessing.

C: Amen.

P: May he, by whose redeeming work you have received the gift of everlasting freedom, make you heirs to an eternal inheritance.

C: Amen.

P: And may you, who have already risen with Christ in Baptism through faith, by living in a right manner on earth, be united with him in the homeland of heaven.

C: Amen.

P: And may the blessings of almighty God, + the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, come down upon you and remain with you forever.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

P: Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life, alleluia, alleluia.

C: Thanks be to God, alleluia, alleluia. ■

Join Fr. Ben Alforque, MSC of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in **GOSPEL BREAK**, a short yet entertaining and insightful discussion of this Sunday's Gospel on YouTube. Visit gospelbreak.wordpress.com. Or scan this QR code with your Smartphone or tablet.

